

A 100-LETTER WORD SQUARE

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In the February 1973 issue of *Word Ways*, I posed the problem of constructing a tautonymic 10 x 10 word square consisting entirely of words and names taken from reference works published since 1950: a modern, space-age word square.

Shortly after the appearance of the article containing my suggestion, a veteran contributor to *Word Ways*, Darryl H. Francis in England, graciously volunteered to join me in my search for a sufficient number of tautonyms to make the construction of the desired word square possible. Since then, both of us have feverishly been searching for modern tautonyms. At this writing (May, 1973) we have collected approximately 350 such tautonyms, or about one-third the number considered necessary for success in the word square project.

An examination of this partial list has, most gratifyingly, produced a first solution to our problem:

D	A	O	L	A	D	A	O	L	A
A	L	G	A	L	A	L	G	A	L
O	G	U	N	G	O	G	U	N	G
L	A	N	G	A	L	A	N	G	A
A	L	G	A	L	A	L	G	A	L
D	A	O	L	A	D	A	O	L	A
A	L	G	A	L	A	L	G	A	L
O	G	U	N	G	O	G	U	N	G
L	A	N	G	A	L	A	N	G	A
A	L	G	A	L	A	L	G	A	L

The words comprising this square are taken from three standard reference works, all published within the past decade, a more rigid time limitation than the one specified in the original problem:

- (1) Webster's Third New International Dictionary of the English Language, Unabridged, 1973 Printing
- (2) The International Atlas, published by Rand McNally & Company, Chicago, New York, and San Francisco, 1969
- (3) Musical Instruments: A Comprehensive Dictionary, by Sibyl Marcuse, published by Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, New York, 1964

For the benefit of those few readers to whom some of the terms in the

word square may not be entirely familiar, accurate definitions follow.

ALGAL-ALGAL. Agar produced in the Malay archipelago from red algae of the genus *Eucheuma*. Webster's Second Edition equates the term with AGAR, other forms of the word being AGAR-AGAR and AGAL-AGAL. The substance is a colloidal extractive used in culture media and otherwise.

DAOLA-DAOLA. A slit drum used in the northern part of the island of Nias, just north of the equator, off the western coast of Sumatra, in Indonesia. A slit drum is a primitive drum consisting of a tree trunk hollowed out like a boat and played by stamping. The word is also spelled DAULA-DAULA. Sibyl Marcuse took the word from the Reallexikon der Musikinstrumente by Curt Sachs (Berlin, 1913).

LANGA-LANGA. A small town in the Republic of Zaire (formerly the Belgian Congo), northeast of the capital of Kinshasa (formerly Leopoldville). Its latitude is $3^{\circ}54'$ South, its longitude $15^{\circ}56'$ East. In fairness to the luckless inhabitants of LANGA-LANGA, we must mention that The Times Index-Gazetteer of the World (London, 1965) spells the name as two separate words, LANGA LANGA, and gives the coordinates as latitude $3^{\circ}50'$ South and longitude $15^{\circ}59'$ East. Dedicated logologists will, no doubt, be flocking to Zaire to establish the town's precise location. In addition, the latter reference work gives us a second LANGA LANGA: this one a town in the Solomon Islands, at a latitude of $8^{\circ}50'$ South and longitude $160^{\circ}45'$ East.

OGUNG-OGUNG. This is the first word of the two-word term OGUNG-OGUNG BULU, an idiophone bamboo tube zither of the Toba Batak (or Batak, or Battak) people of northern Sumatra. Do not ask what "idiophone" means; the word is not in any dictionary, including the one by Sibyl Marcuse. As is commonly known, the Batak are an Indonesian ethnic group inhabiting the highlands of Sumatra -- a semicivilized, agricultural group. Marcuse took the name from Een en ander over de muziek en den dans op de Kei-Eilanden by Jaap Kunst (Amsterdam, 1945).

Historic as is the word square exhibited here, it fails to meet the criteria of logological esthetics in a variety of ways:

(1) It consists entirely of hyphenated words. A square using at least some solidly written words, such as KERRIKERRI, STRUMSTRUM, or WALLAWALLA (all in Webster's Second Edition, incidentally) would possess higher logological merit.

(2) One word, ALGAL-ALGAL, is used in four positions each way instead of in only two such positions -- an inexcusable deviation from the esthetic ideal.

(3) One term, LANGA-LANGA, is a proper name instead of an ordinary word.

(4) One word, OGUNG-OGUNG, is not an independent word but appears only as part of a two-word term.

(5) Three different reference sources have been employed. Esthetically, all words should be in one source, or there should be five words taken from five different sources. Anything in between is bungling.

We have just begun, and our relentless search for a better word square continues unabated. Help in augmenting our list of tautonyms from other readers of Word Ways would be welcome.

QUERY

The sequence of letters ...IRONGES... is an example of a tetragram chain because each set of four adjacent letters can be embedded in a Websterian word: IRONy, wRONG, spONGE, iNGESt. It is possible to arrange 24 letters of the alphabet (omitting J and Q) in a tetragram chain; this is extendable to 25 letters if words for any of the following tetragrams can be located: RDMI, RJUG, or ENDJ. It is almost certain that no Web II words with these tetragrams can be found, but it might be possible to locate examples in Web III.